

Speaking the Truth in Love

International Bible Lesson

Ephesians 4:1-16

Sunday, December 16, 2012

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“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:15—KJV).

“Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head” (Ephesians 4:15—GNB).

“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:15—NRSV).

The Bible commands us to speak and teach the truth. In order to obey this command, we must know the truth. Jesus declared that He was the truth (John 14:6). All truths have a direct or indirect relationship to Jesus Christ, through whom God created the world. Whenever scientists discover a truth, they learn a truth that relates in some way to Jesus Christ, our Creator. God the Father loves the world, and He sent Jesus Christ into the world as the greatest demonstration of God’s love that the Father and the Son could possibly give us. Every old and new truth, every truth the Bible reveals and every truth awaiting discovery, reveals something about God’s great love for us. As the written Word of God, the Bible is the truth. Therefore, when we rightly understand the Bible, we know the measure by which to evaluate beliefs, discoveries, and ideas that claim the status of truth.

When people need to change their beliefs or behaviors, speaking and teaching the truth alone will not accomplish what God intends; for this reason, Jesus demonstrated the love of God when He taught about the love of God. He showed the love of God even unto death to save God’s disobedient children from living apart from God and the truth. Following Jesus’ example, Paul commands us to speak the truth in love when we need to talk with anyone who needs to correct their ideas, lifestyle, or relationships with God and others. The Holy Spirit can use the truth we speak in love to help people grow and become more like Jesus Christ.

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Thinking Further

1. What do you think Paul meant by “the calling to which you have been called” (Ephesians 4:1)?

2. What might be some reasons Paul wants believers to lead a life worthy of their calling?

3. Why do you think Jesus gives gifts to those who believe in Him?

4. Which gifts of Jesus do you think the Church and the world need most today?

5. What might happen to the Church and the world if believers do not use the gifts Jesus gives them?

Read the verse by verse commentary on this lesson at the BibleLessonForum.com. See the recommended study and worship resources at SmallChurchResources.com.